



National

POISON PREVENTION WEEK PLANNER



www.PoisonHelp.hrsa.gov

POISON CENTERS: MAKING THE RIGHT CALL

Every 8 Seconds...Someone Calls a Poison Center.

What is a poisoning?

A poison exposure occurs when a person swallows, breathes, touches, or gets splashed in the eye with something that can cause sickness or death. Poisoning is a matter of dosage—too much of anything can be dangerous. Products such as pain medicines and household cleaning products are common causes of poison exposures in the United States. Most consumer products are safe if label directions are followed, but some can be poisonous if used incorrectly.

Who gets poisoned?

In 2007, 2.5 million people were exposed to poisons. Almost 1.3 million of these occurred in children 5 years or younger. In the same year, almost 860,000 adults (people 20 years and older) called Poison Centers.

How do people get poisoned?

Most poisoning exposures are unintentional. Only about 13 percent are deliberate, due either to a suicide attempt or intentional misuse.

What are the leading causes of poisoning for children and adults?

Children

- Pain killers such as acetaminophen and similar medications
- Cosmetics such as perfume or nail polish, and personal care products such as deodorant and soap
- Cleaning products such as laundry detergent and floor cleaners

Adults

- Pain killers
- Sedatives (drugs used to reduce anxiety), hypnotics (sleeping pills), and antipsychotics (drugs used to treat mental illness)
- Household cleaning products



Where do people get poisoned?

Approximately 90 percent of poisonings occur inside the home.

Where can you get help for poisoning?

Your local Poison Center can be reached through the national toll-free Poison Help line at **1-800-222-1222**. Poison Centers are staffed by nurses, pharmacists, and physicians. They can help with poisoning emergencies and offer information on ways to keep your family safe. Poison Centers are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Service is available throughout the entire United States and many territories. Also, translation services are available in 161 languages. The call is free and confidential.

Why call a Poison Center?

About 70 percent of people who call a local Poison Center get the help they need over the telephone without having to go to a doctor or the hospital.

For more information, call your local Poison Center at **1-800-222-1222** or visit www.PoisonHelp.hrsa.gov and www.aapcc.org.

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